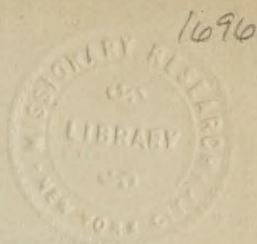


Yam.
Misc.

Y.M.C.A.



REPORT
of the
Standing Committee on Associations
to the
Forty-first International Convention
Atlantic City, N. J.
November 14-19, 1922

THE COMMITTEE

DR. J. P. MUNN, *Chairman*, New York City
PROF. O. E. BROWN, Nashville, Tennessee
REV. C. W. GILKEY, Chicago, Illinois
REV. ROY B. GUILD, New York City
G. C. HUBERT, Hartford, Connecticut
C. R. JOY, Keokuk, Iowa
H. P. LANSDALE, Rochester, N. Y.
JAMES LOGAN, Worcester, Massachusetts
DR. W. D. MACKENZIE, Hartford, Connecticut
REV. JOHN M. MOORE, Brooklyn, New York
H. L. SEAMANS, Columbus, Ohio
E. L. SHUEY, Dayton, Ohio
K. A. SHUMAKER, Chicago, Illinois
H. W. STONE, Portland, Oregon
S. WIRT WILEY, Minneapolis, Minnesota

To the Forty-first International Convention of the Young Men's Christian Associations of North America:

Gentlemen:

The work of the Standing Committee on Associations was defined in the following resolution adopted by the Washington Convention:

"RESOLVED, That this Convention appoint a Committee to investigate the standing of the North American Associations as to the Portland test, and if the active, voting members (those who hold office) are found not to be on the Portland Basis they shall be warned and given three years to reform said irregularity. Any Association which violates this rule after this notification shall be stricken from the rolls."

The International Convention held in Detroit in 1919 authorized the Committee to continue its work and "to increase its membership for the more thorough study of the various problems involved in its work" and requested the Committee "to take into close consultation trusted leaders of the Churches and of the Association"; also to make a special study of the Student Department in all its relations.

In compliance with the instructions of the Detroit Convention, and for the purpose of making a more thorough study of the practice of local Associations concerning their Basis of Active Membership, the Committee has increased its number by the addition of twelve members, representing various Association groups and Church bodies.

The Committee has continued to make inquiry concerning and to study the Basis of Active Membership of the local Associations. In May, 1922, it sent a formal inquiry to all local Associations, requesting a statement from them concerning their Basis of Active Membership, both as to constitutional requirements and as to practice. A summary of the replies received to this inquiry follows:

SUMMARY OF REPLIES TO INQUIRY SENT BY COMMITTEE
ON ASSOCIATIONS

	Total Reporting in Year Book	Number Replying to Inquiry	Per cent Replying
City	720	684	95
Railroad	230	207	90
County	108	38	34
Army and Navy....	32	17	53
Colored	123	59	48
Student	341	262	76
Indian	14	7	50
Total	1568	1274	81

Two hundred and six (sixteen per cent) of the replies indicate irregularities with reference to office holding or voting, as follows:

City	36	5%	of replies from City Associations.		
Railroad	25	12%	"	"	" Railroad Associations.
County	15	40%	"	"	" County Associations.
Colored	4	7%	"	"	" Colored Associations.
Student	123	47%	"	"	" Student Associations.
Indian	3	43%	"	"	" Indian Associations.
Total		206	16% of replies from All Associations.		

	City	Railroad	County	Colored	Student	Indian	Total
Constitution does not limit either office holding or voting to members of Evangelical Churches	3	11	9	3	72	2	100
Constitution does not limit office holding to members of Evangelical Churches	3	1	2	1	7		14
Constitution does not limit voting to members of Evangelical Churches	2	4			16		22
Constitution regular but in practice office holding not limited to members of Evangelical Churches	14	8	3		8	1	34
Constitution regular but in practice voting not limited to members of Evangelical Churches.	14	1	1		20		36
Total	36	25	15	4	123	3	206

The Committee calls attention to the fact that while 1,978 Associations are known to be in existence, only 1,568 submitted reports for the 1922 Year Book. It is probable, however, that most of the Associations failing to report to the Year Book are in the smaller places and do not have a large number of active members. The above data shows that the Associations which have replied to the Committee's inquiry, excepting the Student group to which subsequent reference is made, have seventy-three per cent of the total active membership of all the Associations in their groups. The inquiry also shows that those who reported Bases of Active Membership in conformity with Convention action have seventy-two per cent of the total active membership of the Associations in their groups. Furthermore, careful analysis of the reported irregularities show that they are mostly infractions of the letter of the Convention ruling rather than of its spirit. The Committee is encouraged, therefore, to believe that there is growing conformity on the part of local Associations with the Convention's requirements concerning the Basis of Active Membership.

From various sources, the Committee learned from time to time of the desire of certain local Associations for changes or adjustments in the authorized Basis of Active Membership. At the request of some of these Associations, the Committee provided opportunity for their representatives to meet with it and to present statements concerning the present practice and reasons supporting a desire for any change in the Basis or definitions thereof. From the replies to its inquiry, and as a result of its extensive correspondence, the Committee also ascertained the views of a large number of other most influential Association leaders in all sections of the country concerning the Basis of Active Membership. It is apparent to the Committee that while there are some who, for historical or other reasons, earnestly prefer that no change be made in the present Basis or in the definitions thereof, there are others who with equal earnestness advocate an alternate Basis providing largest liberty. The Committee's own conclusions, in the light of all the evidence submitted, leads it to submit recommendations involving no change in the Basis, but permitting alternate definitions of the term "Evangelical." These are submitted with the unanimous recommendation of the entire Committee, excepting four members who have been unable to meet with the Committee or to advise concerning its work.

"RESOLVED, That in determining which Churches are Evangelical for purposes affecting the Basis of Active Membership, local Associations may regard as Evangelical churches any of the following:

- "1. Those conforming to the definition adopted by the International Convention held in Portland, Maine, in 1869.**
- "2. Those designated as eligible for membership in the Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America, or the corresponding body of the Dominion of Canada.**
- "3. Those which may be so regarded by the local Federation or Council of Churches, or where such Federation or Council does not exist, by a majority of the active pastors of those churches of the community which are eligible for membership in the Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America."**

In presenting these recommendations, the Committee directs the attention of the Convention to the following points involved in the recommendations:

1. That they do not involve any change in the Basis as adopted by the Convention of 1869, but only provide for alternate *definitions* of the term "Evangelical" as adopted by the Convention of 1869.
2. No change in the present Basis is mandatory upon any Association. The adoption of either alternate definition is entirely optional with any Association.
3. Both alternate definitions conform to the principle heretofore accepted by the Convention in recognizing the Association's relation and allegiance to the Church, and accepting a decision of the recognized "Evangelical" Churches concerning which denominations are, or are not, "Evangelical."

4. In the second alternate definition, there is recognition of the principle of local autonomy, first, in according to local Associations the right of choice of alternate definitions of the term "Evangelical," and second, in permitting a majority of the recognized churches of a local Community to determine whether other local churches are or are not "Evangelical."

In its studies of the Membership Basis as related to Student Associations, the Committee has found many interesting developments and significant trends. Out of the 678 Student Associations, including colored and Indian, known to be in existence, 432 submitted reports for the Year Book of 1922. Of those reporting to the Year Book, only 260 replied to the Committee's inquiry. It seems probable that this low figure may be explained by the fact that the inquiry was issued near the close of the college year and, therefore, may not have been received by many Associations; and by the further fact that fully four-fifths of the Student Associations have no graduate Secretaries and the work is directed entirely by volunteer student officers. Of those replying to the Committee's inquiry, 123, or forty-seven per cent, reported irregularities either in practice or in constitutional requirement. A study of these irregularities shows a trend towards the use of a personal statement of purpose. It is noteworthy that only thirty-two reported having found the alternate basis for membership, authorized by the Washington Convention, acceptable as a personal basis.

Finding this widespread variation and lack of uniformity, the Committee on Associations asked the various Student Councils, National, Regional, and State, to confer and cooperate with it in the endeavor to work out some uniform basis which might be generally accepted by all Student Associations.

Your Committee desires to acknowledge the splendid cooperation given to it in its study of the Student situation by the various Student Councils and by the Association of Student Secretaries. These representatives of our Student Movement have made an exhaustive study of the question of the Basis of Active Membership as it affects the Student Associations. As a result of these studies, the National Council, composed of two representatives from each of the several Field Councils, worked out a proposal of a Basis of Active Membership which they submitted for consideration to local Associations, State and Field Councils, and the State and Summer Student Conferences. This very thorough process of national discussion and study had not been completed at the time when this report was issued. The Committee believes that the progress already made by these Student leaders will result in the unanimous recommendation of a Basis by the National Council of Student Young Men's Christian Associations prior to the opening of the Convention, so that it may be submitted by this Committee to the Atlantic City Convention for its consideration and action.

Respectfully submitted

On behalf of the Standing Committee on Associations,

By JOHN P. MUNN, *Chairman.*

New York City,
October 20, 1922.

